

Reading Toolkit: Grade 4 Objective 3.A.3.c

Standard 3.0 Comprehension of Literary Text

Topic A. Comprehension of Literary Text

Indicator 3. Use elements of narrative texts to facilitate understanding

Objective c. Identify and describe the setting and the mood

Assessment Limits:

Stories that have settings with a distinct time and place

Stories that have settings with a distinct time and place

Table of Contents

Objective 3.A.3.c Tools

- Advanced/Gifted and Talented
- Lesson Seeds
- Public Release Item #1 - Selected Response (SR)

Indicator 3.A.3 Tools

- Clarification

Handouts

- "One Little Can"

Advanced/Gifted and Talented Reading Grade 4 Objective 3.A.3.c

Other Objectives Addressed

- a. Identify and distinguish among types of narrative texts
- b. Identify and explain the elements of a story
- d. Identify and analyze the characters
- e. Identify and explain relationships between and among characters, setting, and events
- f. Identify and explain how the actions of the character(s) affect the plot

Instructional Task

Students will use the elements of narrative text to create a dinner party seating plan for characters from a narrative text. The goal of the seating arrangement is to facilitate an interesting and lively conversation. Students will determine who should sit next to whom and will develop a dialogue around the narrative elements (authentic product).

Development of Task

- Students will read narrative text of appropriate complexity and map the elements of narrative text.
- The teacher will introduce the problem of the dinner party using a question about the text such as, "What would happen if you invited both (the protagonist) and (the antagonist) to a dinner party? What might happen if they sat next to each other at dinner? What could we do to ensure that they did not sit next to each other?"
- Students will select characters from the text to invite to the dinner party, explaining their choices through discussion or writing. Students will decide on a seating arrangement and create a visual representation of the dinner table (visual learning style).
- The teacher will use the "Questions for the Dinner Plan" from the chart below to focus student thinking on the elements of literary text to include in the dialogue.
- Students will compose the conversation between the pairs or triads of guests that could occur at the table, incorporating the elements of narrative text including character relationships, story setting, plot and mood (synthesis).
- As an option, students may perform their dinner party conversation as a Reader's Theatre (auditory learning style).

| Objectives | Questions for the Dinner Plan |
|---|--|
| Identify and distinguish among types of narrative texts | In what ways does the type of narrative text affect the type of dinner party you will plan? |
| Identify and explain the elements of a story | Based on the events of the story, what characters would you sit next to each other? What characters would you sit far apart? |
| Identify and describe the setting and mood | Based on the setting and mood of the story, when and where should the dinner party take place? |

| | |
|--|---|
| Identify and analyze the characters | Based on the characters' traits in the story: What behaviors would the characters exhibit at the table? Which characters had traits that would make them popular guests? Which characters had traits that might cause problems? |
| Identify and explain relationships between and among characters, setting, and events | How might the setting and mood affect what the characters say and how they say it? Which characters would you not want to sit together? Why? (analysis) Which relationships might change if the characters had a chance to meet one more time at your dinner party? Why? (interpersonal intelligence) |
| Identify and explain how the actions of the character(s) affect the plot | How would the characters describe their roles in starting and resolving the conflict of the story? |
| Identify and describe the narrator | What would the characters say about the narrator of the story? |

Lesson Seeds

Reading Grade 4 Objective 3.A.3.c

Activities

Students should read a narrative text with a detailed setting and mood. Once students have completed their reading, the teacher should identify the setting for them. Students should return to the text to select details that define the setting: time, day or dates, month, year, season, historical references, geographical names, landscape details, and weather elements. Next the teacher will identify the mood for students. Again students return to the text and find details of setting, dialogue, and word choice that create mood. Finally students and teacher should discuss whether or not or how the setting and mood work together in the narrative.

After students have read a narrative text, the teacher should write a statement about a narrative's setting, mood, or setting and mood on the board or overhead. Each student should turn to the student seated to the right of him or her and discuss the statement. Students must return to the text to retrieve support to argue for or against the statement on the board. After the partnered discussion, a general classroom discussion should follow where all relevant details of setting and mood are reviewed.

In a second reading of a narrative text, students will be asked to identify and record information about the setting and the mood and then to determine the setting and the mood of the text. Next students will return to the text to find any character actions or beliefs that can be directly attributed to either the setting or mood. Students will record that character action or belief and explain using text support the connection between the setting and/or mood and character. Teacher Note As an extension for more advanced students, they may analyze the chart's information and determine the level of importance the setting has to the schema of the text. To do this, they must decide to what degree the setting drives the behavior and beliefs of characters. Teacher and students should consider these guiding questions. Did the setting cause the character to behave the way he/she did? To what degree did the setting affect the character? What were other factors affecting the character's behavior? How did that character's behavior affect other characters or the setting itself? Initially modeling these thought processes with students will prove beneficial.

| Setting | Mood | Character's Actions | Explanation of Connection |
|---------|------|---------------------|---------------------------|
| | | | |

After reading a narrative text, teacher and students will list details of setting and then of mood. Then students will be instructed to draw the setting of the text labeling details from the text in their drawing. Finally students will compose a caption for the drawing which addresses both setting and mood.

Clarification

Reading Grade 4 Indicator 3.A.3

To show proficiency of the skills stated in this indicator, a reader will demonstrate an understanding of the **elements of narrative texts** which are the components through which a story is told. Identification of each component and its relationship to all other components in a story assists a reader in comprehension of an entire text. As a text requires more complex thought processes, a reader advances from the identification, recognition, and recall of literal elements to the inference, analysis, and evaluation of more abstract elements. Thinking about all the elements in a story and determining how they fit together allow the reader to understand and evaluate an entire text and its complexity.

In order to comprehend narrative text, a reader must **identify and distinguish among types of narrative texts**. Narrative text tells a story to make a point, to express a personal opinion, or to provide a reader an enjoyable experience. By recognizing the characteristics of a variety of literary texts which represent diverse perspectives, a reader is better able to construct meaning from a text.

Fiction

prose writing that tells an imaginary story

Nonfiction

prose writing that tells about real people, places, and events

Realistic Fiction

prose writing set in the modern world

Science Fiction

prose writing that explores unexpected possibilities of the past or future by using scientific theories or data and imagination

Historical Fiction

contemporary fiction set in the past, may reference actual people or events

Tall Tales

humorously exaggerated stories about impossible events in which the main characters have extraordinary abilities

Folktales

stories passed by word of mouth from generation to generation

Folklore

traditions, customs, and stories passed down within a culture

Myth

a traditional story, usually by an unknown author, that answers a basic question about the world

Legend

a story handed down from the past about a specific person who usually demonstrates heroic accomplishments

Fables

brief tales that teach lessons about human nature

Fairy Tales

stories about imaginary beings possessing magical powers

Fantasy

literature that contains fantastic or unreal elements

Biography

story of a person's life written by someone else

Autobiography

nonfiction; a person tells about his or her own life

Personal Narrative

personal story; a shorter form of autobiographical writing

Memoir

type of autobiography, usually about a significant experience in the author's life

Journals

a personal record of experiences or reflections

Short Story

a brief work of fiction, usually readable in one session

Essay

a short, cohesive work of nonfiction dealing with a single subject and presenting the writer's viewpoint

Play

literature intended to be performed by actors in front of an audience; includes script with dialogue, a cast of characters, and stage directions

Poetry

stories, ideas, and feelings expressed in compact, imaginative, often musical language

Lyric Poetry

poetry that presents the thoughts and feelings of a single speaker

Narrative Poetry

poetry that tells a story and includes narrative elements

To **identify, explain and analyze the conflict of a narrative and determine its role in advancing the plot**, a reader must know the structure of a narrative passage.

- In the beginning or exposition of a narrative, information is given about the characters, their location, and the situation in which they find themselves. This situation creates a story problem or conflict.
- A conflict can be created by single or multiple sources, either external (caused by outside forces) or internal (created within the character). Typical types of conflict include person versus person (problem between and among characters), person versus society (problem with the laws/beliefs of a group), person versus nature (problem with natural forces), person versus self (problem within a character regarding decision-making), and person versus fate (problem which seems out of a character's control). In complex texts, there may be multiple conflicts.

A character experiencing one of these conflicts may act on or speak about the conflict to other characters and be motivated to action by the conflict. In some narratives, a conflict may help clarify character traits for the reader. In other stories, a conflict can also advance the story events, pushing the characters to a critical point of a story.

A critical reader can identify and determine conflicts, sometimes isolating a common cause for different conflicts.

- In the rising action, the chronology of events develops and the conflict deepens. At the climax of the narrative, the deepening conflict reaches a critical point and can alter the subsequent events.
- As the conflict resolves, the narrative moves toward completion in the falling action.
- Finally, in the resolution the narrative comes to a close. A critical reader should be able to analyze the resolution of the conflict and trace the plot development to determine how each stage of that development advanced the plot.
- As the level of a text becomes more difficult and the main plot develops, a subplot of lesser importance may be present. The subplot may have all the elements that a main plot does and will tell a story that relates to character development, theme development,

or any other story element. The subplot may have an effect on the outcome of the main plot or may simply serve as additional, perhaps interesting, element of the story.

To **identify, describe, and analyze details that provide information about setting, mood created by setting, and the role the setting plays in the text**, a reader must first know what information to look for in a text. Setting is where and when a story takes place. Clues to setting include any of the following: time, day or dates, month, year, season, historical references, geographical names, landscape details, and weather elements. As the complexity of a text increases, a reader should take note not only of stated setting details but also look at more subtle details.

Setting can relay information about characters to a reader. A character's reaction to an environment, whether familiar or unfamiliar, gives clues to what a character is feeling or how a character will act in certain circumstances. Changes in setting may signal changes in mood and development of a character.

Mood is the feeling a text creates within a reader. Setting can help create mood. For example, a setting in an abandoned house creates an eerie mood. Details of that setting help establish that uncomfortable mood in a reader. An author also creates mood through dialogue and word choice.

A critical reader will be attentive to the details of setting, mood, and character and their integration within a narrative.

Not all narrative texts have theme, but in those that do, there is often more than a single theme. **Theme is the author's message to the reader or the underlying idea of a text.** Theme is often relayed to a reader through characters—what they say, what they do, or what others say about them—as well as by other narrative elements.

To **identify and analyze characterization**, a reader must identify a character as a person, animal, or imaginary being in a narrative. Major characters are most involved in the conflict of a narrative and are central to much of the story action. Minor characters are less important and become known to a reader through their interaction with major characters.

Characters may reveal their attitudes and innermost thoughts through their speech and their behavior. For more complicated texts, a reader is privileged to know directly the interior thought processes of a character. This enables a reader to draw conclusions about why a character might behave the way he/she does and to consider reasons for the type of interactions that character has with other major or minor characters. Then these interactions allow other characters to comment about the behavior or speech of that character. One character's comments about another character form a direct link to understanding their behavior.

Character speech, action, thought, motivation, and reaction are interdependent and work together to create well-rounded characters. These elements make a character "real" and lend believability to the narrative. When characters are made "real," they, like real people, change and grow. They are called dynamic characters because of their development. Their opposite, static characters, change not at all or only marginally. The strong, dynamic character shifts or is shifted by the plot, each exerting an equally forceful influence on each other. Character and plot then become linked in a narrative.

To **identify, explain, and analyze relationships between and among characters, settings, and events**, a reader must discover how each element is linked. Connections between and among characters are established by elements of characterization. Connections between

and among situations are established by key events and how these events fit together. A critical reader can determine an organizational pattern, such as cause and effect, between or among situations and then draw conclusions about characters and their speech and behaviors within the context of the situation.

For more complicated texts, a critical reader can isolate characters and determine major from minor characters, the degree to which each is developed, and how they affect each other and the story events. A critical reader can isolate each story event to see its effect upon previous events and those that follow it as well as the effect the event exerts upon a character or characters.

To identify and describe the narrator, a reader must determine the teller of the story. In a first person narrative, the story is told by a character in the story who uses the nominative pronouns I, me, and we. In a third person narrative, the narrator is a voice outside the story action that uses the nominative pronouns he, she, it, and they.

The speaker of a poem is the voice that "talks" to the reader. The speaker of a poem is not necessarily the poet.

To identify, explain, and analyze the actions of the characters that serve to advance the plot, a reader should know that characters cause the plot to happen. Usually a story plot is based on what characters say, do, or believe. Conflicts evolve from interactions between and among characters. In turn, plots develop around conflicts. What a character does affects the development of the plot as well as its resolution.

A critical reader of literary text can

- isolate characters, determining if they are major or minor characters, noting their actions, speech, and thoughts, and observing the attitudes of other characters toward them
- detail conflicts created by and among characters and determine the type of conflict that is created
- follow a plot, judging how that plot is driven by character elements or character conflict
- determine how character, conflict, and plot function together

To analyze an author's approach to issues of time in a narrative, a reader must first be able to follow the elements of a narrative--exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution--and to identify key events within each of those divisions of a narrative. Some events may be related as flashbacks during which the author relates an event out of sequence at an earlier time. A flashback provides a reader with information that will help him/her understand setting, characters, or conflict. A critical reader is aware of transitional words or text features that signal a flashback.

Foreshadowing is present through hints or clues in a text that suggest what may occur later in the sequence of the narrative's events. Foreshadowing occurs throughout a narrative and helps to create a tension as the reader anticipates what will happen. A critical reader understands that plots are not always chronological and that these two techniques are used to augment a reader's comprehension of and interest in a narrative.

To identify, explain, and analyze point of view and its effect on the meaning of a narrative, a reader must know that point of view is the perspective from which an author tells a story. There are two major points of view--first person and third person. In a first person narrative, the story is told by a character in the story. This narrator is a participant in the story action and tells the story using the pronouns I, me, and we. This type of narration is

limited because a reader knows only the narrator's perspective of other characters, the setting, and story events.

In a third person narrative, the story is told by someone who is not a character in the story. This type of story-teller may relate events much like a reporter relaying the news and use the nominative pronouns she, he, and they. More often, though, a third person narrator will relay the thoughts and attitudes of a single character, usually the main character. This is limited omniscient narration. At times a narrator will relay the thoughts and feelings of all characters. This is the omniscient or all-knowing narrator.

A critical reader knows that not all narrators are reliable and that they may present information limited by their own knowledge and observations. This, in turn, may limit a reader's knowledge. To construct meaning of a narrative, a critical reader must acknowledge the scope and the limitations of each type of narration and then using other narrative elements, draw conclusions about meaning.

To analyze the interactions among narrative elements and their contribution to meaning, a reader must have knowledge of all narrative elements and their dependence upon each other. A critical reader must determine the type of narrative being read, the type(s) of conflict in the narrative, the relationship between the setting and the mood of the narrative, the ways that character is developed, the relationship that exists among the characters, the setting, the story events, and the point of view from which a narrative is told. Each of these elements must be analyzed in isolation and then observed as a piece of a whole narrative. Finally, a critical reader makes judgments about the relative importance of each of these elements to a particular text, and then using each element and its contribution, constructs meaning of a whole text.

Public Release #1 - Selected Response (SR) Item

Handout(s):

- One Little Can

Reading Grade 4 Objective 3.A.3.c

Read "One Little Can" and answer the following question. The setting plays an important role in this story because it —

- A. contributes to the mood of the story
- B. leads to a problem that can be solved
- C. provides a hint of what is to come
- D. allows the reader to picture the characters

Correct Answer:

B

Handouts

One Little Can

By David LaRochelle

¹Rachel scowled in disgust as she walked to the school bus stop. Her neighborhood looked like a junkyard. The sidewalk was littered with newspapers and candy wrappers. The front door to Lee's Grocery was covered with ugly graffiti. It was spring, but instead of green grass and flowers, the yards seemed to be sprouting broken branches and trash.

"Yuck!" Rachel said as she brought her foot back to kick a soda can off the curb. Then she changed her mind, picked the can up, and tossed it into a litter basket on the corner. She hurried to meet her friends at the bus stop.

³Mr. Lee scowled as he looked out his grocery store window. "Hmph," he said as the girl passed by. She's probably another troublemaker, he thought. One of those kids who spray-painted graffiti all over my door. Kids today are just no good.

To confirm his suspicion, the girl stepped back to kick a piece of garbage into the street. What she did next, though, surprised him. She bent down, picked up the old can, and dropped it into a trashcan.

⁵That's a switch, thought Mr. Lee.

All morning as he unboxed soup cans and cereal boxes, he kept picturing that girl. At noon, when he walked to the corner to mail a letter, he noticed the litter that had piled up in front of his store. He thought of that girl again, then got a broom and started sweeping the walk.

⁷Mrs. Polansky peered out from between the window blinds in her living room. A crumpled sheet of newspaper blew into her yard and got snagged on a rosebush. She hated living across the street from Lee's Grocery. Customers were always dropping their trash in front of the store, and invariably it would blow into her yard.

Maybe I should write a letter to the city council, she thought, or call the mayor. If Mr. Lee is going to let his store be such an eyesore, maybe it should be shut down.

⁹Just then Mr. Lee walked out of his door. Mrs. Polansky quickly shut the blinds, but when she peeked out again, he was sweeping up the trash on his sidewalk.

That's a change, thought Mrs. Polansky.

¹¹A few minutes later, when she went to let her cat out, she noticed that the stray newspaper had unsnagged itself from her rosebush and was tumbling into the next yard. She caught a glimpse of Ms. Sinclair, her neighbor, frowning at her from the porch.

Mrs. Polansky looked around at her own unkempt yard.

¹³"Well, Fluffy," she said to her cat, "Mr. Lee isn't the only one who can do a bit of outdoor spring cleaning."

She went inside and got her work gloves and a trash bag.

¹⁵When Rachel got off the school bus that afternoon, the first thing she noticed was the woman planting geraniums around the edges of her front walk. A fat gray cat was swatting at a butterfly that flitted among the bright red blossoms. Hadn't that yard been strewn with dead branches and soggy newspapers this morning? Several other yards looked tidier, too. She even spotted a pair of crocuses peeking up from a freshly raked garden.

When she passed Lee's Grocery, Mr. Lee was out front painting his door the color of a spring sky. He smiled at her as she walked by.

¹⁷Maybe my neighborhood doesn't look so bad after all, Rachel thought. She knelt down and picked up a lone candy bar wrapper, slam-dunked it into the litter basket, and sang out loud the rest of the way home.